1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

286 554 weaver's occupation. If the weaver were to become a Copt and live among Copts, he would be on a social level equal to a poor, laboring Amhara.

C. Semi-specialized and unskilled.

463 563 The present division of labor is still based on the former feudal structure of the Amhara economy and human organization. Specialized skills are left to other ethnic groups, and, apart from non-ignoble occupations such as war, church, agriculture, healing, the Amhara reserve to themselves semi-specialized occupations and part-time labor traditionally carried out by household retainers.

The latter type of labor, dealt with in this section, can be roughly divided into three categories: (1) labor arising out of the feudal lord-peasant relationship; (2) semi-specialization "that anyone can learn", in the attitude of the Coptic Amhara; (3) temporary labor, for which specified wages based on Time and Energy are agreed upon, called "damoz" (a contraction of "dämä-wäs", lit. "blood-and sweat" compensation). This term is even used for temporary marriage, during which the woman acts as cook and travelling companion.

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466 [566] The first category arises out of the obligations owed by the sharecropping "gabbar" to his feudal lord or landowning church: the former statute labor, when everyone would come with his own tools and construct a

466 house, a church, a simple bridge, help in harvest, make charcoal and gather incense for the church, conduct pack animals on military expeditions, functinn as guard or sacristan, Amhara labor thus includes the agricultural worker of many semi-skills, who usually hires on in March when the little rains launch the plowing season, and who must furnish a "was", a personal guarantor who will be responsible for the employee's conduct, and agree on time, energy to be expended and wages to be received.

465 At present the wage is about Eth$30.- per month for full-time labor, 6 days a week, sunrise to sunset (12 hours, less about 3-5 hours rest); plus free food (usually simple) and a place to sleep inside a hut or temporary shelter; clothing is at the employee's expense. Important church holidays are observed, and leave is usually granted to take care of personal affairs, in the case of an Amhara -Coptic employee. The master may not beat or haze the employee, on penalty of a fine levied by the "cheqa shum".

464 Thus, even the poor Amhara laborer retains his pride, but causes the employer to look for labor among socially lower ethnic groups or even Shanqalla ex-slaves who have remained, largely in Amhara territory after liberation. The employer pays these less, works them more, even on church holidays since many of them are still non-Christian. In proud Begemdir (Gondar) province, where no Galla or Gurage ethnics are available for labor (as they are in Shoa), unskilled labor is a

464 and be willing to forego his usual demands, temporarily. During the caravan season, some will hire on as mule-drivers for a round trip. Otherwise the day laborer is rare among rural Amhara, and met more often only in provincial capitals and the few cities.

D. Labor and the market-town.

464 Laborers hiring on in the towns for temporary work (e.g. in construction) do so usually through a labor broker. There are no organized factories in the provincial towns, only a few small ones in the main cities, and [467] there is not yet such a modern development as a labor union. Child and female labor is widespread and almost entirely [465] unskilled. A laborer's daily wage was equated with 25¢ Ethiopian, by clause 6 of the Penal Code of 1930, but the present rate actively paid for urban labor of Amhara is Eth$1.-per day. The Emperor's factory proclamation of 1944 authorized the Ministry of Commerce to regulate hours and conditions of labor, but this actually anticipates future conditions and finds little application at present.

357 466 The household servant in the town usually hires out on a monthly basis. The traditional, personal guarantor and 2 witnesses of wage agreement are still necessary. The salary may now be as high as Eth$40.-. The servant is also fed and housed, and if he stays some months may keep any clothing given him. Moreover, his

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

792 council of elder monks

If a nunnery is attached to the monastery (e.g by common ownership of land), they are separated by riverbeds, steep hill, etc., and have their own pasturage meadows, and their own chapels.

262 792 465 The staple foods are beans and peas, consumed in large quantities, usually boiled as "nefro" (the staple hot dish of fasting periods), and a specially thick, nutritious bread, "debbye". The latter is at least 1-½ feet in diameter, at least half an inch thick. It is cut into quarters, and each monk receives a specified number of quarters according to his monastic rank. Thus, older, high-level monks who need less food have much surplus with which to engage the services of church students, or even trade with peasants for occasional chickens, honey, spices, etc. The range is from a mere one-quarter for the lowliest monk to 12 quarters for the head of the monastery, plus proportional distribution of "nefro".

Barley-beer is also similarly rationed out, on permitted occasions. Cotton cloth (abujedid) and shamma or natala togas are distributed once a year, preferably in time for the masqal holyday.

792 The chanting of prayers and poetry permeates the atmosphere, from 3 A.M. when the monk supervisor of the day enters the kitchen, humming the pre-dawn chants, to long after nightfall when students still practice for exams.

000 prevail.

871 Most elementary school graduates from the provincial capitals
465 do not continue to Addis Ababa for a high school education, for they can obtain good and honorable positions, paying ETH$125.- (US $50.-) per month in the same town, as teachers, municipal clerks, with a good chance to be appointed to judgeship soon if they cultivate the right persons in power with "daj temat". Even Students who "flunk out" in the 7th or 8th grade can earn ETH$100.- as teachers of lower grades, or as low-grade clerks.

872 One old tradition which has broken down in the modern elemen-
212 tary schools but not in most church schools, is the prohibition of
178 extra-curricular writing. In the higher church grades, in which students' piety was already confirmed, especially in the monastery schools, copying psalms, gospels, (and by extension, government documents), was permitted, practiced, even regarded as praiseworthy. But there was, and in rural areas still is, fear that less pious students would use their knowledge of writing to experiment with magical formulae, doodlings, etc., creating dangerous mischief.

Therefore, parchment goatskins and writing equipment were carefully kept away from students of village church schools, and they were not taught to write. Thus, achievement of the skill of a scribe, "dabtara", required considerable individual initiative and study away from home.

212 However, boys at the "experimental" age of childhood, would
257 amuse themselves with the forbidden game of writing and doodling in secret, and they still do. Their work can be seen scribbled even on the outside walls and posts of some churches, a daring prank, sometimes in imitation of the church painter. More often

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

585 bride and groom merely expresses the prayerful wish that "God will show the way" to the lay couple toward "qurban", in time. In fact, middle-aged couples who have gone through several divorces and have finally decided definitely to spend the rest of their days together, may take the "aklil" in "qurban". Qurban for lay people, e.g. deacons, is performed usually only 40 days after their "semanya", to make certain that their marriage bond is strong and real and that no rift has arisen (e.g. if the bride had been found not a virgin).

588 487 "Damoz" marriage (lit. wage) is what the term implies. Most commonly the arrangement is from month to month, but may be for longer or shorter periods, such as the duration of a caravan trip, or an extended stay at a major market, where the "damoz" wife offers the best and often the only available hotel and restaurant services. (She is similar to the Biblical lady in the city of Jericho). The term is a contraction of "dam-wag" (lit. "blood - and - sweat") compensation. Her wages vary greatly from region to region, and have considerably increased in recent years, for even the new, modern law recognized her claim. In the past she did well if she received ETH$5.-per month in addition to housekeeping expenses, but now some obtain ETH$20.- from traders. The agreement is made orally but before witnesses, so that she can go to court if the man defaults on his payments. If they separate at the expiration of the contract, she has no right to half his property as does the semanya wife, but if there are children conceived during her contract, the children can make a claim for part of the father's inheritance should he die.

[465] [675] [428]

576 [573] Apart from this interpersonal relationship of choice, in which two individuals establish psychological response to each other (and mutual aid) outside the kinship group, most other forms of interpersonal etiquette are patterned so formally that they can be readily learned (even by outsiders). The vagueness and ambivalence of shifting etiquette of the Western world of modern times has not yet affected Amhara culture. Even modern-educated Amhara continue to fall back to the established pattern of traditional etiquette as soon as they return to their own country.

576 a) Formal Expressions of Status of Class, Age, Sex.

In formal expression of status, be it of class, age or sex, Amhara etiquette differentiates most sharply the dominant role from the role of the subordinate.

The most dramatic expression of this is the "gursha". It is enacted by the status superior toward the status inferior, a symbolic giving of food, money, wages, or other gifts. Thus, the master who wishes to indicate fondness and favor to the servant, will stuff some morsels of food into his mouth, publicly, while at dinner. A father will do it to his children, or to his wife. A chief may do it to a visiting "great man" of inferior or equal status, but never to a superior. However, a wife who has been married for some time and feels secure enough in her status to demonstrate equality, may jokingly return the favor and feed "gursha" to her husband, but only after he has initiated the activity.

[465] Servants, when receiving wages, receive them with both hands raised above the head, with bowed head and downcast eyes, and must never look at the money, much less count it in presence of the employer; for etiquette requires that wages be regarded as "gursha". (In recent years, the term "gursha" has become used in the sense of "tip", gratuity, baksheesh.)

5: Bruce T-5 (1768-1773) 1804
MP5 Amhara MP5

four cuba for a pataka, each cuba about two rotol, or somewhat less. Butter, 20 rotol, for 1½ pataka, and 3½ harf. Civet, 1½ pataka the wakea. Wax, 4 patt. the faranzola. Elephants teeth, 35 rotol for 18 patt. Water, 1½ paras the smallest jar, and 3 paras the largest. Abyssinian gold dust, 15 patt. per wakea, at Mocha. Dora, 12 measures for a pataka. The Venetian sequin goes for 2¼ patakas. 435 804

The Abyssinian grain measure is the ardeb, which, at Gondar, contains 10 measures, called Madega, each equal to 12 ounces, Cairo weight. An ardeb of grain costs 2 derims, or 2 patakas; an ardeb of teff, the same; 6 or 8 ardeb of tocusso pay an ounce (wakea) of gold, or 10 derims.

Servants Wages at Gondar *. At Gondar a maid-servant receives 15 salts per annum, and is fed in the house. A man-servant is paid 4 pataka yearly, which correspond to four wakea, or ounces of gold, Abyssinian weight, and receives besides two loaves, or cakes of teff, for his support daily. If his master is good, he sometimes gives him a little flesh, lentils, or vetches. He is not obliged to clothe him, but he sometimes gives him a pair of trowsers, which consist of about one-fourth of a yard of white cloth. 465 351

With respect to carriage, &c. three bundles of wood, which are brought from Tchagassa, three hours walking, cost a salt. The carriage of a jar, or manteca, full of wine, or honey, from Emfras, eight hours journey, pays a salt, of the weight of 3 faranzala, or so. 435 482

Thirty-three teff bread cost a salt; the loaves are about 3 lines thick, and 18 inches diameter. A pair of shoes (pantufle) cost a salt. 8¼ peeks of cloth is the least gift that can be offered in the country. 435

Bouza. Manner in which the Abyssinians make a kind of beer, that, in their language, is called bouza. 273

To make this, they use tocusso simply; but sometimes they mix it with grain (wheat), or dora, or all three together; but in ordinary tocusso is best. A jar of tocusso, or of the three sorts of grain, contains as much as is sufficient to make two loaves, that are a tenth part of the whole jar; besides which, they use about half a rotol of Ghesh leaves.

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* From this, to the 29th line of page 68, is a translation from the Italian of L. Balugani.

[p. 41]

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

175 Finally, by reorganizing the provincial administration through the bureau-
178 cratic machinery of the Ministry of Interior, the power and prestige of
631 regional appointments have been reduced. The authority of the central gov-
642 ernment has been enhanced by redrawing the provincial boundaries so as to cut across, in many cases, what were traditional administrative regions. Governors at all levels have been made ordinary employees of the Ministry of Interior, with assistants and secretaries provided by the Ministry, who serve as a constant check on their activities. Earlier in his reign, Haile Selassie deprived the great provincial governors of the right to order capital punishment and of the prerogative of conferring lesser titles.

178 Stripped of their military functions, large revenues, and other means of
565 building up their positions, members of the most important noble families
631 have had no alternative but to submit totally to the sovereign authority of
642 Haile Selassie. This has meant, in most instances, their relegation to posts of
646 high prestige but little consequence: diplomatic posts abroad and, more commonly, the senate. Established by the Constitution of 1931 as the upper house of parliament, the senate was to consist of members "appointed by His Majesty the Emperor from among the Nobility (Mekuanent) who have for a long time served his Empire as Princes or Ministers, Judges or high military officers." The institution was re-affirmed in the revised Constitution of 1955, and has provided, as one of its continuing functions, an outlet for dignitaries with too much prestige of their own to be trusted with administrative positions or permitted to reside in their home regions.

565 Many lesser nobles have remained in the provinces with appointments as
631 regional governors and judges. Because of the shift of political authority to
693 Addis Ababa, they tend to feel forsaken and dispossessed. They regard the
578 behavior of those who occupy high governmental posts in Addis Ababa as selfish and corrupt, and view with no little bitterness the fact that youngsters with college degrees earn a great deal more than they. (A subdistrict gov-
[465] ernor, for example, earns Eth$50 per month, while those with an A.B. automatically start any government job at Eth$450.)

178 Nevertheless, these lesser nobles continue to comport themselves in the
565 aristocratic manner of the old nobility and retain their high status in the
554 eyes of the local populace. However modest their resources now—and many continue to enjoy quite sizable holdings of land—they are proud of what-
[571] ever titles and offices have been given them. Though their part in the national political structure and status system is not so weighty as that of their forebears, they remain the only fully accepted secular elite in the provinces. It is they who issue the day-to-day commands to the people, and they alone for whom the peasantry has unflinching respect. Short of a brutally totalitarian program that is willing to ignore the sentiments of the mass of tradition-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

"subject to the approval of the Emperor" and gave him "the right to promulgate the decrees, edicts, and public regulations of the Church, except those concerning monastic life and other spiritual administrations."

The general position of the church had already been weakened by the events of the Italian occupation. Italian policy resulted in the destruction of many church buildings and the massacre of numerous monks, including those of the hallowed monastery of Dabra Libānos. Of the national leaders, the Egyptian *abuna* was out of the country from 1937 on; two of the bishops were put to death, including the much venerated martyr, Abuna Pēṭros;* and the remaining two compounded the demoralization by openly supporting the invaders. One of these went so far as to anathematize resistance fighters and forbade Ethiopian priests to give Christian burial to those who died as patriots. In some areas, moreover, it is said that the local clergy lost much prestige by welcoming the invader with open arms.

Haile Selassie thus had a much stronger hand in his dealings with the clergy when he returned from exile in 1941. The next year he issued a decree which sharply restricted the perquisites of the local clergy. Their landed properties were no longer tax free, but now carried the obligation to pay taxes at the normal rate into a central church treasury. The church was deprived of temporal jurisdiction over its ordained and lay members, including the authority to inflict fines, and was denied the right to corvée labor from peasants living on their lands. (In practice these latter restrictions of authority are frequently ignored in the provinces.)

The development of a nationwide system of government schools, finally, has broken the clergy's monopoly of educational facilities. Wherever government schools have invaded traditional Abyssinian regions, the clergy tend to be defensive and resentful. The specific issues have been the decreased prestige of certain traditional religious subjects, which are not taught in these schools, and the comparatively lower income of church teachers. Thus, a full-time teacher of reading attached to a monastery may receive Eth$15 a month from the central church treasury, whereas a government school teacher in the same area teaching the same subject may earn Eth$150 a month.

Despite all these blows, the clergy still retain much the same prestige as ever in the provinces. Their influence over public opinion is considerable, and has been a major factor in discouraging families in traditional Christian areas like Manz from sending their children to government schools.† Despite

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* A statue of Abuna Pēṭros has been raised in the center of Addis Ababa. His fate has been celebrated in the verse drama by Makonnen Endālkātchaw, *Yä-dam Demṭs*, translated into English as *The Voice of Blood* by Endālkātchaw Makonnen.

† When the Ethiopian government is ready to inaugurate a major program of provincial education, it should not prove difficult to overcome this opposition. A number of provincial priests, with whom the author has discussed this matter, have signified their willingness to serve as

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

home—except for the difficulty of having to do without servants. Those students whose rural background and limited intellectual experience had led them to consider Addis Ababa as one of the most advanced cities in the world were often shocked by the comparison. No less shocking was the moral climate, which permitted one to express oneself freely and honestly. The taste for intellectual freedom was added to that of political freedom, as students whose horizons were limited by the meager intellectual fare at home came into hungry contact with authors like Marx and Freud, Dewey and Russell.

However much the Ethiopian students abroad might seek to lose themselves in the host culture, they were not permitted to do so. In the mirror of foreigners' regards, their identity as Ethiopians took clearer shape, transcending narrower tribal identifications. Questions about Ethiopia by foreigners aroused greater interest in Ethiopia's history and contemporary problems. A number of students were thus moved to delve into the literature on their country produced by travelers and scholars in the past, and some of them came to write theses and dissertations on problems related to Ethiopia's development.

All of these factors—broadening of perspective, acquaintance with a higher economic standard, less inhibited discussions, and greater self-consciousness as Ethiopians—contributed to a spirit of nationalist dedication. This spirit was confirmed or aroused in all but two groups of the returnees. One, consisting of children of some wealthy members of the new nobility, went abroad chiefly for the prestige and pleasure involved. For them the experience was an extended holiday; they were playboys more than students. The other group consists of those who were abroad for too short a time to have a complete educational experience—in some cases, for as little as three months. These students have tended to use the tour abroad chiefly as a weapon with which to lord it over their peers on return and otherwise to serve narrow personal ambitions. Those students, however, for whom study abroad entailed a more or less serious encounter with higher education and a more modernized culture normally experienced a swelling aspiration to serve their country. They returned home deeply critical of the status quo and determined to contribute substantially to the modernization of their society.

Ostensibly, the returnees have been well situated for making such a contribution. Thanks to prudent government policy since the early fifties, they have been enabled to enjoy a minimally comfortable standard of living. Given a monthly allowance from the moment they step off the plane, they have been automatically salaried at a scale based largely on the academic degree attained, with A.B.'s starting at Eth$450 a month and Ph.D.'s at Eth$700. In addition, provisions have been made for them to borrow money from the government in order to finance heavy investments like furniture or, more usually, an automobile.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

automobile. All this permits returnees to live at a standard which, while clearly inferior to what they enjoyed abroad, is well above that of all their countrymen except the higher nobility. Their income compares favorably with the prevailing monthly wages for policemen (Eth$25–$30) and district (*waradā*) governors (Eth$100), and not unfavorably with the salary earned by vice-ministers (Eth$1,000). Compared with the more sumptuous residences of the new nobility, their housing is threadbare, their staff of servants small; but usually their homes contain one or two modern appliances—a radio or phonograph, perhaps a refrigerator.

The returnees have, moreover, been shown deference from many quarters: from the modernizing sector of the public which, in its growing esteem for education, has adulated them as the most educated Ethiopians and, in the early fifties, regarded them as something of national heroes; from resident Europeans and Americans, whose perception of shared understandings with the returnees has flattered them; and from the government, which at the least has shown consistent concern for their economic security and at best has given them responsibilities and status that they would not be granted in a more modernized society without considerably more experience.

Despite such apparent advantages, however, it must be said that the returnees as a whole have so far done little either to modernize their country or even to establish themselves as a self-respecting status group. Their failure to do so has become one of the most widely discussed questions in Ethiopia in recent years, both among the more self-critical of the returnees and among critical Ethiopian and non-Ethiopian observers. Instead of being leaders of the new era, they have been little more than misfits in the old. If the central quality of the life of the new nobility has been anxiety, that of the intellectuals has been frustration. In the passionate words of one of them: "There is a wound, a boiling within each and every one of the returnees." Theirs is the frustration of modernized individuals attempting to live meaningful lives in a society that has remained essentially traditional.

The ideological aspect of this dilemma is that no synthesis of traditional and modern perspectives has yet been effected which has won the adherence of a sizable number of intellectuals and which could serve to energize their transformation of the status quo. Consensus exists only with regard to a vague sense of the inadequacy of the traditional system. There is no sense of direction. Partly this reflects deprivation due to maladjustment in personal areas, but it also represents a genuine cultural problem.

Foreign-educated Ethiopians return intellectually aware of the traditional nature of their society, but emotionally unprepared to cope with the tenacity of tradition or with the paucity of modern institutions and culture. The experience of culture shock seems greater when they return to Ethiopia than

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

brothels for dancing and more intimate relations. (Returnees normally do not have patience for the shy, traditional girls; and they are too concerned about public opinion to be seen visiting brothels. When they or the locals do visit the brothels, it is often by way of a backdoor entrance.) When they marry, the locals almost invariably choose a traditional type of wife with relatively little education and with whom they expect to have an authoritarian relationship.

In sum: the local is not so afflicted by those problems which derive from the central dilemma of the returnee—how to fulfil himself according to modern standards in an intractable, traditional environment. The local's dilemma typically lies in a different realm, that of economic and social mobility. Whereas the returnee has been given a comparatively high income and status almost as a matter of course, the local has normally started his work life with a relatively low salary and little prestige. If the returnee has felt deprived relative to the Westerners in whose society he has lived, the local has felt deprived relative to the returnee.

The local lives on a day-to-day basis at a relatively simple standard. Though he shares the returnee's passion for woolen suits and, in many cases, for a car of his own, he is not, like the returnee, preoccupied with the quest for housing that conforms to Western standards. Except for those with extraordinary talents and family connections, the locals have had difficulty locating jobs that they feel are not beneath their dignity and which pay salaries sufficient to cover their relatively modest needs. They customarily receive a starting salary in the neighborhood of Eth$150. The more ambitious and fortunate among them have, by changing jobs, manipulating superiors, and improving skills, worked their way up to salaries in the Eth$400–$500 category. Some have become provincial teachers for a while, in order to accumulate money on which to live while shopping for a position in Addis Ababa and with which to influence some higher official to grant it to them. There remains a hard core of locals who feel they are underpaid and live in constant resentment of this situation.

This resentment has produced a general sort of negativism which characterizes many of the locals, a negativism expressed in the form of backbiting and denunciation of the higher government officials and the nobility generally. They decry social injustice and the uses of nepotism. They moralize profusely against those whom fortune has shown greater favors. But not all their social criticism is born of resentment. There are also among the locals many young men who are comfortably situated but fired by patriotic fervor with a desire for social reform.

The local is as deeply concerned about asserting his status vis-à-vis the less educated as he is to advance his position in the hierarchy. Locals are extreme-

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

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between the works performed by the two categories of healers.[31] Laymen conceive the debtera's healing powers as the product of his knowledge of asmat, possession of awdunigist, and intimacy with ganel familiars. Although the layman recognizes that his own knowledge of these matters is inexact, he assumes that the debtera's use of asmat, awdunigist, and familiars can be synthesized into an integral body of learning, skills, and practices. Two types of syntheses are believed possible. The first of these characterizes the "weak" (tiniš) debtera, already discussed in chapter three. This debtera lacks demon familiars, but he can perform awdunigist calculations and he possesses sufficient asmat to provide prophylactic amulets and a number of therapies. However, his prophylaxes are easily breached by powerful sorcerers or determined ganels, and his therapeutic powers do not exceed those of secular herbalists. The second synthesis characterizes the awakiy debtera. Here, the debtera's professional title signals the possession of ganel famili-

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[31]The layman's belief in the medical superiority of the awakiy debtera is asserted verbally, in the context of herbalist chains, and in the impressive fees paid to the debtera (for therapy, ten times and more the amount paid to a secular healer; for prophylaxes, fees between E$50. and E$300. are not uncommon).